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US urges Latin America not to deepen ties with Iran

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The United States yesterday urged Latin American countries not to deepen ties with Iran as Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad prepared to visit Venezuela, Nicaragua, Cuba and Ecuador.

"As the regime feels increasing pressure, it is desperate for friends and flailing around in interesting places to find new friends," State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said when asked about Ahmadinejad's trip.

"We are making absolutely clear to countries around the world that now is not the time to be deepening ties, not security ties, not economic ties, with Iran," she told reporters.

"Rather, it's in the entire international community's in-

terest to make clear to Iran that it's got a choice," she said.

Nuland could not say whether these points were made directly to Venezuelan and Cuban officials, but she said Washington was in "close touch" with Nicaragua and Ecuador about Ahmadinejad's trip.

The United States and the European Union have been stepping up sanctions against Iran over its uranium enrichment program, on top of four rounds of UN Security Council sanctions and a host of unilateral punitive measures.

The United States and western powers suspect Iran's program masks a drive to build nuclear weapons. Iran denies the charge saying its program is purely peaceful.

Join the fun during the first major event of Carnival 58 tonight!



This evening, not long after sunset, the first of dozens of joyful parades, pageants and parties that comprise Carnival season 58 on Aruba will take place in Oranjestad beginning at 7:00 PM. The Fakkelop-tocht-or Torch Parade-is a delightful, casual affair, and one of the most popular, as islanders welcome six weeks of revelry punctuated by elaborate costumes and fantastic floats.

However, the most common costume for the Torch Parade is usually logo tee shirts declaring your group affiliation and theme and wild and amusing hats and accessories. It is an



Roadmarch, and Prince and Pancho (the jester.)

The parade will start at the western outskirts of Oranjestad on the L.G. Smith Boulevard, and groups will gather and organize on the service road across from Valero station. The parade will wend its way along the shorefront to the Las Americas traffic circle fronting Cas di Cultura and then turn up the Vondellaan to finally turn at Wilhelminatraat onto the Avenida Milio Croes, finishing at Cricket Field.

This route will afford island visitors the opportunity to view the parade early in the evening if they

choose to dine at one of the many fine restaurants along the route, some of which will provide a front row seat to the festivities. Make an evening of it in Oranjestad and enjoy this authentic bit of island culture, a memorable way to top off a night out.

Official list of group participating in the 2012 TorchParade:

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7. Dushi Carnival Group
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9. Pleasers & Teasers Le Groove
10. Aruba Trading



evening when all are welcome to join the fun and dance in the streets, meet last year's Carnival royalty, who will soon abdicate in favor of this year's contest winners competing for these coveted titles of Queens, Kings of Tumba, Calypso and

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FDA finances EZRA (Electronic Care Registration Application) Registration System



The University of Aruba is conducting a Base-Line Assessment regarding drug addiction on Aruba. This research is focused on an actualization of the data compiled in a FUNDINI report of 1997. The general impression is that the use of drugs on Aruba has increased and is causing a great loss of productivity. It is also the culprit in the disruption of the nuclear family and the cause of much of the criminality. Observers believe that it is important to quantify the problem so that we can delineate an effective management policy.

addict has a manipulative conduct. The drug addict is also known to "shop-around" for his care. All of this results in the loss of precious time, money and energy. In order to curtail the "shopping-around" and to use the limited resources more efficiently and effectively, it has been decided to introduce a digital registration program.

Effectivity, efficiency and the guarantee of privacy are foremost in any good registration system with respect to the health care of a client.

Continued on page 5

It is no secret that the drug



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Subway introduces a deliciously healthful new choice: Avocado dressing



An assortment of wraps and sub sandwiches to please all tastes

For those that have not yet visited the Subway shop in the Alhambra Mall, you are in for a revelation. Though the center is in the midst of renovations, Subway is open in a charming new location with a lovely, airy terrace to comfortably enjoy one of their fresh, healthy meal options.

Subway also announced that for a limited time, they are now offering a tasty, fresh, and extremely healthy new dressing: lightly seasoned avocado. This wholesome choice offers a long list of health benefits, among them the lowering of

cells. The oleic acid in this fruit is effective in preventing breast cancer and it also rich in phytonutrients, which have been found to help prevent prostate cancer. The glutathione in avocado boosts immune systems, slows the aging process, and encourages a healthy nervous system; and beyond all that, is supposed to neutralize bad breath, so you can also add all the red onion and garlic you like on your Subway sandwich!

Subway has always offered a variety of fresh, healthy alternatives when a schedule demands "fast food," and their new avocado option costs only



Appealing selection of wraps and subs

foliate, mono-saturated fats and antioxidants.

1.85 to add on, or just over \$1. Island media sampled a number of Subway standards and delectable wraps for the launch of this new dressing, and gave them a definitive thumbs-up!

by Rosalie Klein



cholesterol levels; rich in vitamins A, C, and E, they are full of other nutrients like potassium (30% more than bananas)

A number of studies have shown that avocado can inhibit the growth of cancerous cells without damaging the healthy

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The Office of the Public Prosecutor announces staunch fines for infractions in Aruba's 58th Carnival festivities

ORANJESTAD -- For the fourth consecutive year, the Office of the Public Prosecutor will apply their "Mess Up and you Pay" policy in their Zero Tolerance program of the Police Force during this year's Carnival festivities.

The goal of this measure is to contribute to a safe and pleasant Carnival season. They are intent on acting firmly and swiftly towards anyone misbehaving. The Zero Tolerance program begins on Saturday January 7th during the Fakkelparade in Oranjestad, and will remain in effect for the entire Carnival season. It is especially applicable to the street parades,

the elections and other Carnival festivities.

The policy of the Office of the Public Prosecutor is to issue fines on the spot to anyone arrested by the Police during a Carnival activity. This will be applicable for any infringement of law and order, such as violence on the street, destruction, drunkenness or any other unacceptable behavior.

If the arrested person pays the fine immediately, the issue will be considered cleared. However, if the arrested person refuses or is unable to pay the fine on the spot, he will be cited then and there to appear before the

Judge in a so-called Carnival's Hearing at a later date. In such a hearing the prosecutor will impose a much higher fine than the original fine served. This means it is always best to pay the fine immediately at the Police Station to avoid said Carnival's Hearing before the magistrate of the court.

Obviously, for other serious crimes, such as serious ill-treatment of others or the possession of a firearm, the offender will most probably be incarcerated.

This year, the Office of the Public Prosecutor will also be collecting overdue unpaid fines. This means, that if a



person is detained during Carnival for an infraction of the law or order and has an unpaid fine, this will be required to be paid right then and there as well. In the event he refuses to pay this fine, he

will be taken to KIA to sit out his detention....this means good bye Carnival 58!

The Office of the Prosecutor detests the excessive use of alcohol, especially under our youth. The excessive use of alcohol continues to be one of the issues that cause so many problems and unpleasant incidents during our Carnival festivities.

This Carnival, please be more responsible and limit the use of alcohol. Do not allow alcohol to spoil our Carnival...enjoy Carnival but do so responsibly by all means!



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Announcement of the Aruba Police Force



ORANJESTAD – The Aruba Police Force announces to all boat owners that the Shore Patrol will start controlling all boats that are anchored without the necessary lights in front of our shores, which endangers maritime traffic.

The lights are compulsorily per art. 4 of the Collision Regulation rule 30 of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea).

The maritime police will be

giving fines to all boat owners who do not comply with this regulation; they are already in the process of contacting boat owners to advise them of this policy and infractions, which can prove dangerous, will result in a fine.

All boat owners are kindly requested take note and act accordingly to comply.

For more information please contact the maritime police at tel. 588-1896.



January – Wk 1

Friday Jan. 6: Carnaval Warm up Jump In - 7 p.m. – 1 p.m. (Loc: Compleho Deportivo Frans Figaroa)
Saturday Jan. 7: Parada di Flambeau (Torch Parade) – 8 p.m.


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Island media feted by SAC and Aruba Trading Company on the eve of Carnaval 58

On Thursday evening, the night before the first major event of the Carnaval 58 season, officers of the Stichting Arubaanse Carnaval, SAC, the body of volunteers that administrate over the weeks of festivities and parades, hosted along with Aruba Trading Company an intimate "thank you" event at the recently opened Cellar 23.

"It is your dedication to covering Carnaval events that helps to bring it all islanders and make the season so enjoyable, as well as getting out the important announcements," SAC President Tecla Kelly-Hernandez told the gathering, "we couldn't do it without you. Give yourselves a round of applause, provided by their agents, Aruba Trading Company, punctuated the convivial evening.



Ana Maria Ramirez and THE MORNING NEWS crew

you deserve it."

Cellar 23 is the new wine



bar/shop located in the former Chez Matilde Restaurant in Oranjestad. The main dining room has been turned into a facility for catered affairs and such events as this, where fine wines and signature brand such as Presidente Beer and Label 5 Whiskey, provided by their agents, Aruba Trading Company, punctuated the convivial evening.

provided by their agents, Aruba Trading Company, punctuated the convivial evening.

Ana Maria Ramirez, representing ATC, welcomed island media and thanked them and SAC for all their hard work during the busy carnival season, helping to preserve and promote this beloved island tradition.

The evening was a great way for news media from print, radio and television to relax and connect with their colleagues after a busy holiday season, wishing each other all the best in 2012. This casual night helped them gear up for the intensive weeks of parades, pageants and music contests that will take place over the next six weeks in a most enjoyable fashion.

by Rosalie Klein



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FDA finances EZRA ...

Continued from page 2

One of the big benefits of a digital registration system is the rapid access to information that this gives, which guarantees an effective and efficient service. It also provides the opportunity to do analysis of different aspects of drug addiction.

The government of Aruba, Ministry of Public Health, has chosen to introduce the EZRA system, which is a system used by the De Hoop-ICT in the Netherlands. EZRA is an abbreviation for the "Electronic Care Registration Application." This system registers the information of every client. In addition it also registers the care administered. Every instance that provides care to the client and works in the area of the elimination of drug addiction will be connected to the system.

There will be specific safeguards built in to guarantee the privacy of each client.

This project has been tendered to Reina Agencies N.V. and NetPro Aruba N.V. The project includes the purchase of computers and necessary equipment to make the EZRA system functional. The total cost of the project is Afls. 239,659,94. The FDA Aruba (The Aruba Development Fund) will assume the financing as part of the National Security Plan 2008-2012.

Present at the signing of the agreements were: Richard Visser, Minister of Public Health, Edwin Roos, president of FDA, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Bislip representing Reina Agencies, and Ad Laheij representing NetPro Aruba. Mr. Adriano Perez of FDA, Ronny Paskel and Georgine Arends of the Ministry of Public Health was also in attendance for the signing.

Four Dutch villages evacuated as heavy rain and winds take their toll

GRONINGEN -- Some 800 people living in four villages along the Eems canal east of Groningen have been ordered to leave their homes because of the serious risk of flooding, following gale-force winds and rain overnight.

The evacuation has been prompted by fears that a dyke along the canal is in a severely-weakened condition. The Eems canal links Groningen to the sea at Delfzijl.

'The dyke could break, and

that means an area covering several hundred hectares will be under water within a matter of hours,' a rescue service spokesman told the Telegraaf.

The villagers have been asked to stay with family and friends, and a sports hall in Ten Boer will open its doors to people with nowhere else to go.

Around 100 soldiers are helping police and fire officers with the evacuation while others are working to reinforce the dykes, the Volkskrant said.

But the dyke at Tolbert, where 80 farmers were asked to leave their homes on Thursday, has now been declared safe, news agency ANP said.

Meanwhile, museum workers at the Groninger museum in Groningen have begun dismantling two ground-floor exhibitions because of the flood risk. Clothing by fashion designer Azzedine Alaia and works by artist Jan Altink are being moved to the upper floors.

Dutch teachers set for three-day strike

THE HAGUE -- Two unions have called for high school teachers to start a three-day strike on Monday in protest against government plans to increase the number of annual teaching hours.

A demonstration will be held in The Hague on Monday afternoon. The organisers say they expect some 1,500 teachers will turn out for the protest.

The unions oppose plans by the education ministry to raise the number of annual teaching hours from 1,000 to 1,040. And

they don't want the education minister to set the number of holiday days. The unions say that's for the employers to decide with the employees.

The LIA union claims there is widespread support for the strike. It says it expects janitors and other supporting staff will join the actions.

The Upper House of Parliament has yet to endorse the increase in the number of teaching hours. Next week's strike is intended to give a clear signal ahead of a decision.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Iranian president to tour US foes in Latin America

CARACAS (AFP) - Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, under increasing pressure from debilitating Western economic sanctions, Sunday begins a tour of Latin America aimed at shoring up ties with his few remaining allies.

Ahmadinejad will meet fellow US foe, firebrand Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, on a four-nation trip that coincides with rising international concern over Tehran's nuclear ambitions.

The Iranian leader will arrive in Caracas late Sunday, kicking off a five-day trip that will on Tuesday see him attend the inauguration of the recently re-elected Nicaraguan leader Daniel Ortega.

Stops in Cuba and Ecuador will round off the tour. All four

Latin American countries have frosty ties with the United States and their leaders have in the past four years made numerous visits to Tehran to build up diplomatic and business links while relations with Washington have worsened.

Ahmadinejad's international affairs director, Mohammad Reza Forqani, said the visit to "what used to be called the backyard of America shows the dynamism of the Islamic Republic of Iran's diplomacy in the world arena."

The trip also "invalidates the claims of the enemies," Forqani was quoted as saying by Iranian state media on Tuesday, in a clear jab at Washington.

The Iranian leader will talk with Latin American leaders about "bilateral ties and regional and international is-

ssues," according to Iran's official IRNA news agency.

However Carlos Romero, a retired international relations professor at the Central University of Venezuela, said Ahmadinejad was "trying to find oxygen in Latin America," while links with other states continue to spiral downwards.

"His country is in a very complicated state internationally and is challenged internally by ever more protests on social networks," over the regime's denunciation of human rights at home and in Syria, Romero said.

While the international community and many neighboring states have condemned Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's months-long crackdown on protesters, ally Ahmadinejad has remained

steadfastly loyal to the Damascus leadership.

The Iranian president will be accompanied on the Latin America trip by his ministers for foreign affairs, trade, commerce and mines, and energy.

Ahmadinejad, who last came to Venezuela in November 2009, was scheduled to visit Caracas in September 2011 but the trip was postponed because of Chavez's cancer diagnosis. The Venezuelan leader, who has since declared himself free of the disease, last visited Iran in October 2010.

But the region's economic powerhouse, Brazil, is notably absent from Ahmadinejad's itinerary next week.

Lytton Guimaraes, an expert on Latin America at the University of Brasilia, said the omission indicated that President Dilma Rousseff was adopting a much cooler ap-

proach to Iran than that of her predecessor Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

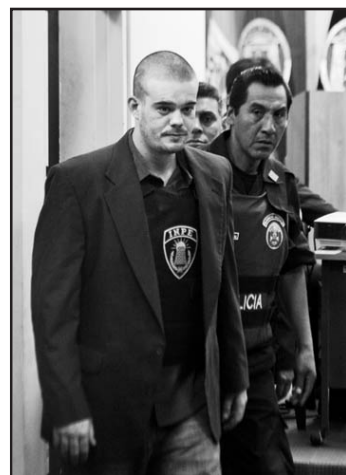
"Brazil is now not going to defend but not going to attack Iran. It's going to sit still," Guimaraes told AFP.

The United Nations' nuclear inspection agency in November reported serious concerns about Tehran's nuclear program, suggesting it contained a military component. Iran insists its atomic activities are for civilian purposes only.

EU countries hope to reach a deal to slap an oil embargo on Iran by the end of January and are seeking alternative supplies for nations who are currently dependent on imports from Tehran, diplomats in Brussels said Friday.

In 2010, oil from Iran amounted to 5.8 percent of total EU imports, making Tehran the bloc's fifth-largest supplier after Russia, Norway, Libya and Saudi Arabia.

Dutchman pleads guilty of Peru murder, trial postponed



LIMA (AFP) - Dutch citizen Joran van der Sloot on Friday admitted to murder, but rejected part of the charges, in a confused plea which led to the postponement of his trial for the 2010 killing of a Peruvian woman.

"I agree with a 'sincere confession,' but I don't agree with

aggravated circumstances," Van der Sloot said in halting Spanish when asked if he would plead guilty in the court in a Lima suburb.

The 24-year-old defendant is also the prime suspect in the unsolved 2005 disappearance of US college student Natalee Holloway in the Caribbean, but has not been charged in the case.

Judge Victoria Montoya adjourned Friday's hearing after less than two hours at the request of the defense, to Wednesday, January 11.

Edwar Alvarez, lawyer for the victim's family, told journalists that Van der Sloot's statement was not a full admission of guilt and that they would have to wait to see the exact position of the defense.

If Van der Sloot fully admitted guilt, the trial could accelerate, with "a sentence

within 48 hours," Alvarez said.

Van der Sloot faces up to 30 years in a Peruvian prison if convicted of murder in the case of 21-year old Stephany Flores, the daughter of a well-known businessman, who was found dead in a Lima hotel.

He had initially pleaded guilty but later claimed that his confession had been coerced.

Flores was killed on May 30, 2010, the five-year anniversary of Holloway's disappearance in Aruba. Van der Sloot fled Peru to Chile, but was arrested and sent back to face trial.

The Dutchman was twice arrested in the Holloway case and spent three months in jail but never was formally charged.

The body of Holloway, who was 18 when she went missing in Aruba in 2005, has never been found.

UN peacekeepers step up South Sudan patrols

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) - UN peacekeepers have stepped up land and air patrols in a troubled South Sudan state where scores of people are feared to have been killed in tribal clashes, a UN spokesman said Friday.

But the UN cannot confirm a statement by a local official in the South Sudanese town of Pibor that more than 3,000 people were killed in clashes, said UN spokesman Martin Nesirky.

Joshua Konyi, commissioner for Pibor county in South Sudan's Jonglei state, said earlier that 2,182 women and children and 959 men were killed in the bloodshed.

About 6,000 armed youths from the Lou Nuer tribe attacked the town of Pibor,

which is home to rival Murle people, at the weekend. The two tribes accuse each other of cattle rustling and abductions.

The Lou Nuer gunmen only withdrew after government troops opened fire, according to UN officials.

The UN says about 50,000 people around Pibor need emergency assistance and the World Food Programme was already sending rations. UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, was expected in the South Sudan capital, Juba, on Saturday.

Even before the Pibor killings, the UN had appeal for \$763 million for South Sudan for 2012 and Nesirky said only eight percent of the total has been pledged.

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International News

Simpson Miller swears in again as Jamaica's leader

KINGSTON (AFP) - Portia Simpson Miller took the oath of office as Jamaica's new prime minister Thursday, one week after her left-leaning People's National Party won a landslide victory in legislative elections here.

Simpson Miller became Jamaica's first female prime minister in 2006, but lost power after a year and a half in office.

In the ceremony at King's House presided by Jamaica Governor-General Sir Patrick Linton Allen, Simpson Miller, 66, placed her hand over the Bible and vowed to fulfill her duties.

In the December 29 election Simpson Miller's party secured 41 seats in Jamaica's House of Representatives -- two thirds of the total -- and showed the door to Andrew Holness, 39, the country's youngest-ever prime minister, of the center-right Jamaica Labor Party.

"In our political history, it is a rare opportunity to be given a second chance to lead," Simpson Miller told

some 10,000 guests at the ceremony, which included Cuban Vice President Esteban Lazo and delegations from the United States and Caribbean nations. She said that she was now better prepared for the task.

Her speech focused mainly on the island's economic recovery, as she is inheriting a nearly 13 percent unemployment rate and a ballooning debt of \$18.6 billion that accounts for one-third of the country's GDP.

Nearly half of all Jamaicans (43 percent) live under the poverty line of \$2.50 per day, according to an IMF report.

"We face an awesome task" in handling the high debt burden and increased levels of poverty, she said.

"In the short and medium term, we will use all state resources to stimulate employment through the Jamaica Emergency Employment Program," she said. "We will do so in a transparent and non-partisan manner."

Simpson Miller also said

she would begin the process of establishing Jamaica as a republic and break off all its ties to former colonial power Britain.

Jamaica is a constitutional parliamentary democracy and also a Commonwealth realm.

Currently under Jamaica's constitution Britain's Queen Elizabeth II is the head of state, and the prime minister is formally appointed by the governor-general, who represents the queen.

In this year, the 50th anniversary of Jamaica's independence "we will ... initiate the process for our detachment from the monarchy to become a republic with our own indigenous president as head of state," she said.

A new agreement with the International Monetary Fund on Jamaica's debt is one of the government's top priorities, Omar Davies, the official in charge of the transition, told reporters on Wednesday.

Talks with the IMF will begin on Monday, he said, adding that new cabinet ministers will be presented on Friday.

US widens its definition of rape

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The United States widened its definition of rape on Friday to include assaults on men for the first time and those in which a victim is incapacitated by drugs or alcohol.

In a statement, the Department of Justice said the revision will improve the accuracy of rape figures as given by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's benchmark Uniform Crime Report.

Since 1927, forcible rape has been defined as "the carnal knowledge of a female, forcibly and against her will" - a perspective that Susan Carbon, director of the Office on Violence against Women, called "outdated and narrow."

From now on, rape will be defined as "the penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim."

Writing on the Justice Department blog (blogs.usdoj.gov), Carbon said: "For the first time ever,

the new definition includes any gender of victim and perpetrator, not just women being raped by men."

"It also recognizes that rape with an object can be as traumatic as penile/vaginal rape," she added.

"This definition also includes instances in which the victim is unable to give consent because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity."

The most recent Uniform Crime Report data, based on input from police services all over the United States, put the number of rapes in 2009 at 88,097, down 2.6 percent from the previous year.

Carbon acknowledged the new definition will likely produce an uptick in the number of rapes in future reports. "This does not mean that rape has increased," she said, "but simply that it is more accurately reported."

The change of definition will have no impact on federal or state criminal laws, or change the way rape cases are dealt with at the federal, state or local levels, she said.



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Health & Living

Brain power can decline from age 45: study



A doctor looks at brain scans at a hospital. Cognitive skills can start to fall from the age of 45, not from around the age of 60 as is commonly thought, according to research published on Friday by the British Medical Journal (BMJ).

(AFP) - Cognitive skills can start to fall from the age of 45, not from around the age of 60 as is commonly thought, according to research published on Friday by the British Medical Journal (BMJ).

Researchers led by Archana Singh-Manoux from the Centre for Research in Epidemiology and Population Health in

France and University College London observed 5,198 men and 2,192 women over a 10-year period from 1997.

The volunteers were London civil servants aged between 45 and 70 who had been enrolled in a long-term health study.

Over the 10 years, the participants were tested three times -- for memory, vocabu-

lary, and skills in aural and visual comprehension.

During this time, there was a 3.6-percent decline in mental reasoning in men aged 45-49 and a 9.6-percent fall in those aged 65-70. The corresponding figures for women were 3.6 and 7.4 percent.

"Cognitive decline is already evident in middle age," says the paper, which defines this as the years from 45 to 49.

The findings should spur further research into spotting and braking cognitive deterioration, the authors hope.

Many societies face an "exponential increase" in the number of elderly people as a result of increases in life expectancy, they note.

"These changes are likely to have a profound influence on individuals' lives and society at large. Poor cognitive status is perhaps the single most disabling condition in old age."

substantially increase mortality," it says.

"Illicit opioid use is a major cause of mortality from fatal overdose and dependence," it says, adding that injecting drug users faced specific threats of catching HIV and hepatitis by sharing needles.

All three types of drugs seem to be associated with higher rates of mental disorders, road accidents and violence, although information about this is often sketchy.

The estimate is based on data from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), from national surveys and peer-reviewed studies into the impact of drug use.

Ecstasy, LSD, non-medical use of prescription drugs and anabolic steroids are not included in the estimate.

Top 5 foods to lower your cholesterol

A few simple tweaks to your diet — like these — may be enough to lower your cholesterol to a healthy level and help you stay off medications.

1. Oatmeal, oat bran and high-fiber foods.
2. Fish and omega-3 fatty acids. Doctors recommend eating at least two servings of fish a week.
3. Walnuts, almonds and other nuts. Walnuts, almonds and other nuts can reduce blood cholesterol.
4. Olive oil. The cholesterol-lowering effects of olive oil are even greater if you choose extra-virgin olive oil.
5. Foods with added plant sterols or stanols. Margarines, orange juice and yogurt drinks with added plant sterols can help reduce LDL cholesterol by more than 10 percent.



Omega-3 rich food

Other changes to your diet

For any of these foods to provide their benefit, you need to make other changes to your diet and lifestyle.

Cut back on the cholesterol and total fat — especially saturated and trans fats — that you eat. Saturated fats, like those in meat, full-fat dairy products and some oils, raise your total cholesterol. Trans fats, which are sometimes found in margarines and store-bought cookies, crackers and cakes, are particularly bad for your cholesterol levels. Trans fats raise low-density lipoprotein (LDL), the "bad" cholesterol, and lower high-density lipoprotein (HDL), the "good" cholesterol.

200 million use illegal drugs: Lancet estimate

(AFP) - About 200 million people around the world use illicit drugs, according to a study published on Friday in The Lancet.

It estimates that in 2009 between 149 and 271 million people used an illegal drug.

Cannabis users comprised between 125 and 203 million; users of opioids (heroin and morphine), amphetamines or cocaine totalled 15 to 39 million; and those who injected drugs numbered between 11 and 21 million.

Drug use is more prevalent in rich economies and in drug-producing regions of poor countries and is often a major health burden, the paper adds.

"Cannabis use is associated with dependence and mental disorders, including psychoses, but does not seem to



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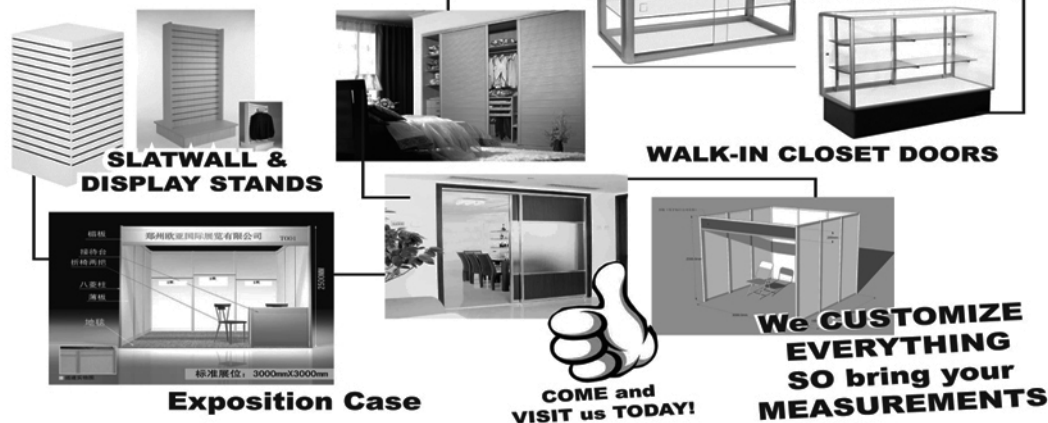


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**Sci-Tech****Tiny wires could usher new computer era**

(AFP) - Scientists said Thursday they have designed tiny wires, 10,000 times thinner than a human hair but with the same electrical capacity as copper, in a major step toward building smaller, more potent computers.

The advance, described in the US journal Science, shows for the first time that wires one atom tall and four atoms wide can carry a charge as well as conventional wires.

That could lead to even tinier electronic devices in the future as well as new steps toward quantum computing, an industry still in its infancy which would create powerful computers that could sift through massive amounts of data faster than current digital computers which use binary code.

"Driven by the semiconductor industry, computer chip components continuously shrink in size allowing ever smaller and more powerful computers," said researcher Michelle Simmons of the University of New South Wales, in Sydney, Australia.

"We are on the threshold of making transistors out of individual atoms. But to build a practical quantum computer we have recognized that the interconnecting wiring and circuitry also needs to shrink to the atomic scale."

Scientists were able to forge atom-sized wires in silicon using a technique called scanning tunneling microscopy, whereby they placed chains of phosphorus atoms within a silicon crystal.

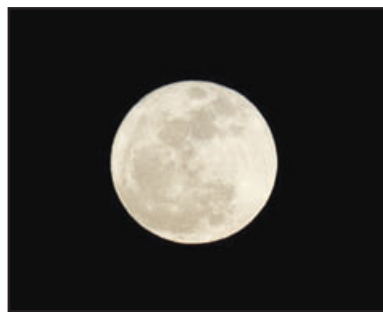
"This technique not only al-

lows us to image individual atoms but also to manipulate them and place them in position," said researcher Bent Weber, the lead author of the study.

The nano-wires they built this way ranged from 1.5 to 11 nanometers thick.

But even though the circuits were smaller, scientists observed no increased difficulty in coaxing an electric charge through them -- what has previously been considered a major obstacle to quantum computing.

In an accompanying Perspective article, David Ferry of the School of Electrical, Computer, and Energy Engineering at Arizona State University called the findings "good news for the semiconductor industry."

Rare Moon mineral found in Australia

(AFP) - A mineral brought back to Earth by the first men on the Moon and long thought to be unique to the lunar surface has been found in Australian rocks more than one billion years old, scientists said Thursday.

Named after Apollo 11's 1969 landing site at the Sea of Tranquility, tranquillityite was one of three minerals first discovered in rocks from the Moon and the only one not to be found, in subsequent years, on Earth.

Australian scientist Birger Rasmussen said tranquillityite had "long been considered as the Moon's own mineral" until geologists discovered it, by chance, in rock from resources-rich Western Australia.

"In over 40 years it hadn't been found in any terrestrial samples," Rasmussen, from Curtin University, told AFP.

When the Moon samples first came back Rasmussen said they were considered to be "extremely precious" and had been subjected to intense, detailed study when -- ironically -- their contents were "right here all the time."

"They were always part of Earth, they haven't come from the Moon," he said of his work on the discovery, published in the journal Geology.

"It tells you that broadly overall you have similar

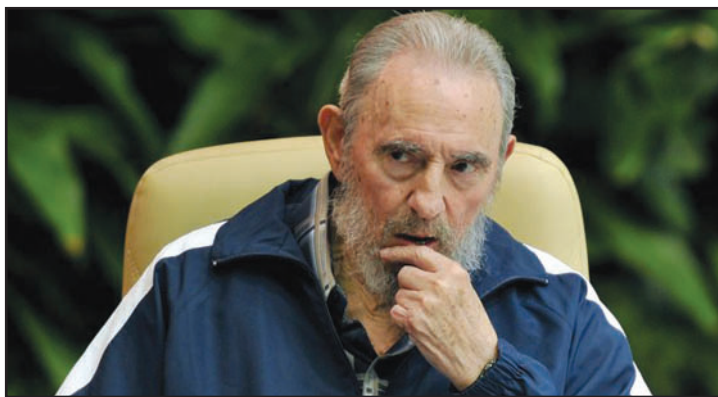
chemistries and similar processes operating on the Moon as on Earth."

As well as being "quirky and surprising" Rasmussen said the discovery also had important practical applications, with the mineral proving to be an excellent dating tool which had allowed scientists to pin down the rocks' age.

"We used this mineral ... to date the dolerite which has previously been undated, so that helped us understand the geological history," he said.

They were 1.07 billion years old, more ancient than rocks in the area had previously been thought to be, and Rasmussen said tranquillityite would be useful in dating similar rocks in the future.

"I think it will be a lot more widespread than just the six locations we've found it so far," he added of the rare mineral.

Fidel Castro warns of climate change, nuclear threat

Former Cuban president Fidel Castro, seen here in April 2011.

HAVANA (AFP) - Cuba's iconic revolutionary Fidel Castro warned that the world was on an "inexorable" march into the abyss this year because of climate change and the threat of nuclear war.

In an article published Thursday -- Castro's first since November 2011 -- the 85-year-old retired leader also took aim at the United States and at gas shale "fracking," a new source of fossil fuels condemned by environmentalists.

He did not, however, address rumors of his death, which were denied by an official Cuban blogger after they surfaced on Twitter earlier this week.

"Many dangers threaten us, but two of them, nuclear war and climate change, are decisive and are drifting further away from a solution," he wrote in an article entitled "The March Towards the Abyss."

Since handing over power to his 80-year-old brother Raul in 2006 because of health concerns, the leader of the 1959 revolution has rarely appeared in public but has penned regular editorials on world events.

In his latest article, Fidel blamed the "inexorable" decline in part on "demagogic talk, statements and speeches from the tyranny imposed on the world by the United States

and its powerful and unconditional allies."

He also wrote about the risk of nuclear war, particularly in the Middle East, where he accused Israel -- the region's sole if undeclared nuclear-armed state -- of having "hundreds" of nuclear weapons.

On the subject of climate change, Castro expressed fears about hydraulic fracturing -- or "fracking" -- a process by which water, sand and chemicals are blasted into the ground to release oil and gas trapped in solid rock.

The process has been hailed by oil companies and other backers as a key new source of fossil fuels, but critics have expressed fears about its impact on the environment, health and safety.

Rumors of Castro's death have periodically surfaced since his retirement, most recently on the micro-blogging website Twitter earlier this week.

But official Cuban blogger Yohandry Bloquera, who is usually well-informed and reliable regarding events in Cuba, denied the reports, saying Castro was reading them himself and "laughing" at them.

"The CIA tried to kill him more than 700 times and Twitter is going down that road," Bloquera wrote on Tuesday.



Taj Mahal
Taste of India

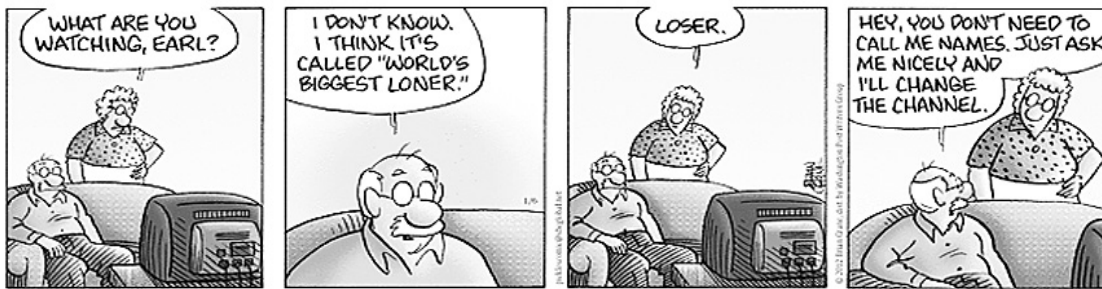
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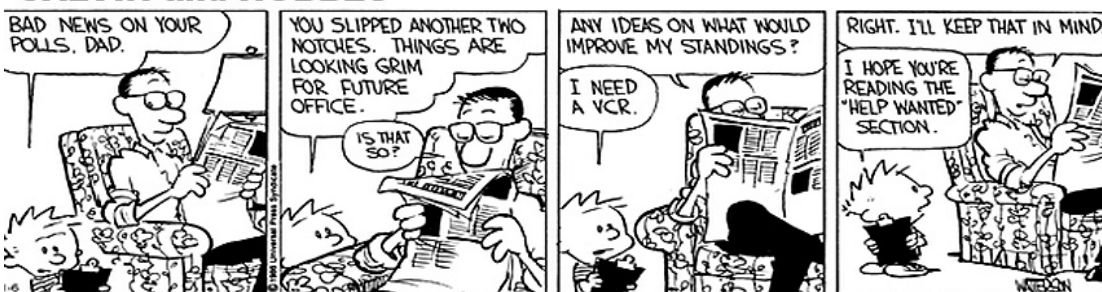
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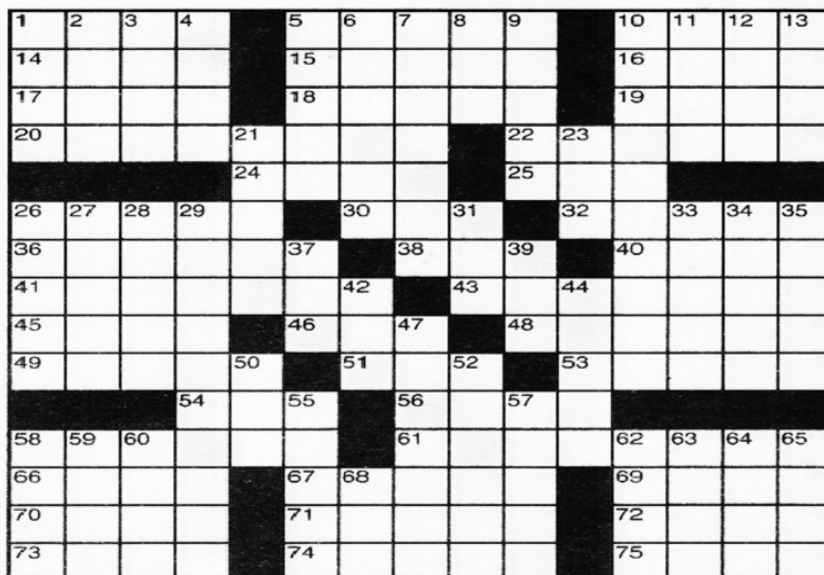
FREE RIDE

ACROSS

1. Twist
5. Jellied broth
10. Toss a lure
14. Belgian river
15. Lead on
16. Dumpster emanation
17. Horne of "Stormy Weather"
18. Atelier support
19. Pinto's neck hair
20. Trestle
22. Power
24. Run ____ (be in a frenzy)
25. Cricket tool
26. Render suitable
30. Trapeze artist's backup
32. Late labor leader Jimmy
36. Sea robber
38. Cen. parts
40. Bandleader Whiteman
41. Love
43. Progress blocker
45. Father of Cainan
46. Female sibling, for short
48. Irish province
49. Where to sip mai tais
51. Whelp
53. Aryan people
54. Antelope
56. Robert of "The Brady Bunch"
58. Clear
61. Database access
66. Affirm
67. Baseballer Luis
69. Math calculation
70. "Just Shoot Me" heroine
71. Result

DOWN

1. Alone
2. Ukrainian port
3. Feudal laborer
4. Corrode
5. Elite military unit
6. "____ of the Witch" (Donovan)
7. House detective's means of entry
8. Quality: suffix
9. Movie star, for short
10. Happen
11. Hebrew month
12. Warbler's output
13. Deuce beater
21. 19th-century soprano Adelina
23. Slangy negative
26. Stamp of the foot, in fencing
27. Vreeland of the publishing world
28. Certain felony
29. Corridor
31. Pod or corn prefix
33. Observes Ramadan
34. Wooden match
35. Observant
37. Dawn goddess
39. Mustangs' campus: abbr.
42. Short snort
44. Slogs along
47. Go beyond
50. Motel's country cousin
52. Brittle base
55. Complete
57. "The Moffatts" author Eleanor
58. Swampy or David
59. Track shape
60. "The Disasters of War" artist
62. Southwestern dry river
63. French airport
64. Word on a library poster
65. "Blind ____"
68. Feminine suffix



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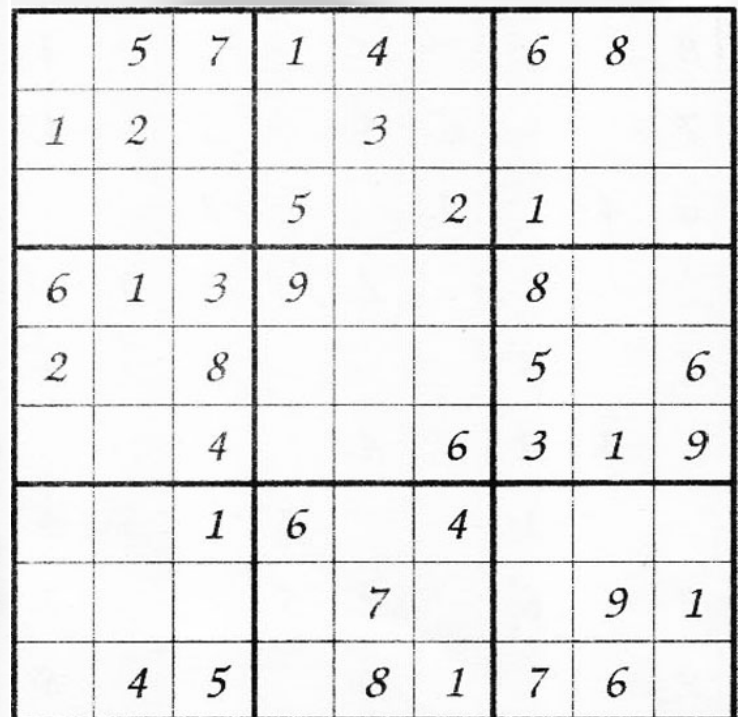
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1	6	T	S	L	E	Z	9	8
8	S	Z	P	6	9	I	E	L
6	I	E	9	T	8	P	L	S
9	L	S	E	I	P	8	6	Z
P	Z	8	L	S	6	E	I	9
L	E	I	Z	9	S	6	8	P
S	P	6	8	E	L	9	Z	I
Z	8	9	6	P	I	L	S	E

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9. A number is Never repeated in a row or column. In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

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Finance

US jobless rate falls to 8.5% in big jobs surge

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The US economy added more jobs in December and the unemployment rate fell again, but economists said big challenges remained to sustaining the jobs market recovery this year.

In a keenly awaited reading yesterday, the Labor Department reported the jobless rate slipped to 8.5 percent as 200,000 jobs were added last month.

The jobless rate was the lowest since February 2009, the month after President Barack Obama took office amid the worst US recession in decades.

The rate was 9.1 percent as recently as August, and economists cheered the new numbers as evidence that economic growth, feeble throughout much of 2011, was gaining traction.

"This is the best possible type of report, as job creation in December was strong and the unemployment rate fell," said Jason Schenker at Prestige

Economics.

"This report provides further justification for continued modest optimism about the US economy in 2012," he said.

Obama, whose political future could hang on how bad unemployment is by the time of November's presidential election, welcomed the news.

"The economy is moving in the right direction. We are creating jobs," he said, while urging Congress to keep supporting stimulus programs for the economy.

The report was stronger than generally expected. Analysts on average had predicted the jobless rate would instead rise, and weaker job gains of 150,000.

The number of unemployed people continued to trend down in December, to 13.1 million, after topping 14 million in mid-2011. Hourly wages and hours worked rose.

But the data showed the lingering deep strains in the labor

market since the recession ended in June 2009.

Those counted as long-term unemployed -- persons without a job for 27 weeks or more -- barely budged at 5.6 million, or 42.5 percent of the unemployed.

Other indicators were flat, including the labor force participation rate, unchanged at 64 percent.

The private sector once again delivered the lion's share of job gains, adding 212,000 in December.

The job gains were broad-based, with jobs added in transportation and warehousing, retail trade, manufacturing, health care, and mining.

However, analysts pointed out that the 42,000 messenger jobs added during the holiday shopping season would likely disappear in January.

Governments at all levels shed a net 12,000 jobs, a slower pace of layoffs amid strained budgets.

France won't wait for EU on financial transaction tax

PARIS (AFP) - France will go it alone if it can not convince its European partners to quickly impose a new tax on financial transactions, President Nicolas Sarkozy warned yesterday.

"We won't wait for others to agree to put it in place, we'll do it because we believe in it," he said, branding it unacceptable that "financial transactions be the only transactions that are exempt from all taxation."

The French leader was speaking in Paris after talks with Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti. Earlier, both Italy and Germany had publicly urged EU members to agree a joint tax rather than impose one unilaterally.

"When you buy a flat, in every country in the world you pay a tax. When you go into a supermarket for food, you pay a tax. When you conduct a financial transaction, you pay no tax," Sarkozy continued.

"Who understands this? Who accepts it?" he demanded.

"This is why France is campaigning for a financial tax. I'm saying this with the approval of the minister of finance," Sarkozy added, referring to Francois Baroin, who had earlier vowed to im-

pose the tax within the year.

Many activists in western countries have long campaigned for a small tax on financial transactions so as to raise funds for environmental and social measures that they say would compensate for the damage done by reckless speculation.

In recent years, some governments have taken up the campaign but most now intend to use the so-called "Robin Hood tax" to help reduce their budget deficits rather than embark on specific social programs.

France and its major euro-zone partners have supported the idea of the tax but now seem divided on how to approach the issue, with the major players in the bloc Germany and Italy openly advising caution.

"It is necessary that the different countries do not go it alone in the application of this tax. I believe in a European perspective," Italian Prime Minister Monti said in Paris before his meeting with Sarkozy.

In Berlin, German government spokesman Steffen Seibert told reporters that "the German position has been the same for a long time.

Brussels demands Belgium pare 2012 budget

BRUSSELS (AFP) - The European Commission has rejected Belgium's 2012 budget as overly optimistic and is demanding it shave an extra 1.2 to 2.0 billion euros to avoid breaching the three percent threshold.

In a letter sent Thursday to Belgian Finance Minister

Steven Vanackere, the EU's Economic Affairs Commissioner Olli Rehn said his services "have come to the conclusion ... the deficit forecast for Belgium in 2012 should be updated to about 3.25 percent of GDP".

Belgium's new government should in consequence "in the coming days" agree to pare down the budget by about 1.2 to 2.0 billion euros, he said.

"This would allow us to conclude... that Belgium has undertaken the required fiscal effort," he said, calling on the country's new government to inform the Commission of its response "by the end of the week, latest by Monday morning."

Under new rules agreed in December that give the EU executive added powers to enforce budgetary discipline,

infringement of the three percent deficit ceiling can set off a quick train of action including fines and judicial penalties.

The Commission late last year singled out Belgium and four other European Union nations -- Hungary, Poland, Cyprus and Malta -- as possibly failing to meet the target. It will issue a statement on January 11.

Belgian Budget Minister Olivier Chastel said on national radio that the centre-left coalition that took office last month had been involved in budgetary talks with the Commission over the last two weeks.

The budget, based on 0.8 percent growth, forecasts a 2.8 percent deficit after sweeping cuts of 11.3 billion euros aimed at avoiding a no-policy-change deficit that could have run up to 4.6 percent of GDP.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

PSS LAMA ALIT
 SWEEP ORAN LICE
 PIETA NEST LEON
 APLACEINTHESUN
 TESTED ASEA
 SEW MTHOOD
 TEND MICA EAGLE
 STARSANDSTRIPES
 ATBAT STIR RUSK
 RESTED SIT
 AIMS NICOLE
 THEMOONLIGHTER
 HEAL DREA HATER
 BALL ETES TREKS
 ORES SEPT STR



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Dutch Antilles	ANG	0.98	1.00	1.002
Canada	CAD	1.72	1.74	1.76
Britain	GBP	2.69	2.74	2.80
Switzerland	CHF	186.69	187.41	188.21
Netherlands	EUR	225.49	227.55	229.83
Sweden	SEK	24.75	25.47	26.27
Denmark	DKK	29.64	30.36	31.16
Norway	NOK	28.68	29.40	30.20
Japan	JPY	228.78	230.87	233.19

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Jackson kids to make dad's footprint in Hollywood

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Michael Jackson's three children are to sink their father's shoes and famous sequined glove into the cement outside a storied Hollywood cinema and tourist site, organizers said Thursday.

In a rare public appearance, Prince, Paris and Blanket will make their late father's mark in the cement outside the Grauman's Chinese Theatre on January 26.

The entrance to the historic cinema on Hollywood Boulevard is a major tourist attraction, with hand and footprints of movie stars and filmmakers from over the decades.

The vast majority of those with prints at the Grauman's - including icons like Fred Astaire, Elizabeth Taylor, Judy Garland, Marilyn Monroe, Sidney Poitier and Clark Gable -- are from the movie world.

The Jackson Estate, which manages the late star's affairs, pointed out that the King of Pop was responsible for such ground-breaking short films

as "Billie Jean," "Beat It," and the classic "Thriller."

"The Grauman's Chinese Theatre forecourt is one of the most photographed tourist sites in the world, annually attracting as many visitors as the Taj Mahal in India and the Prado Museum in Madrid," said a statement.

The Grauman's hands and footprints ceremony "is rich in tradition and provides the four million plus people a year who visit the site an up close look at the hand and footprints of Hollywood's most notable talents," it added.

The ceremony will include a presentation by the cast of the "Michael Jackson The Immortal World Tour," a Cirque du Soleil show performing at the Staples Center in Los Angeles January 27-29.

Jackson died on June 25, 2009 from an overdose of the powerful anesthetic propofol. His doctor Conrad Murray was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter in November and jailed for the maximum of four years.

'The Iron Lady' should have been delayed: British PM



Meryl Streep as Mrs. Thatcher

LONDON (AFP) - Prime Minister David Cameron said Friday "The Iron Lady" should have been delayed until after Margaret Thatcher's death, as the film showing the former premier's descent into dementia opened in Britain.

The biopic shows Thatcher as a frail, sometimes confused old lady -- she is now 86 and is rarely seen in public -- looking back at her career with the ghost of her late husband Denis looking on.

Cameron, in his first comment on the film, said he had been impressed by Meryl Streep's portrayal of Britain's first woman prime minister, who like him was a leader of

the centre-right Conservative party.

But Cameron questioned whether it was right to make the film while Thatcher was still alive.

"It's a fantastic piece of acting by Meryl Streep but I just can't help wondering why do we have to have this film right now?" he told BBC radio.

"It is a film much more about ageing and elements of dementia rather than about an amazing prime minister, and my sort of sense was -- a great piece of acting, a really staggering piece of acting, but a film I wish they could have made another day."

Streep has said she relished the "opportunity to play someone at the waning of her life... and that interested me too because there aren't very many films that pay attention to older ladies."

The American actress, who is tipped to win the third Oscar of her career for her performance, was due to speak to media in Paris later Friday to promote the film, in which she is reunited with "Mamma Mia" director Phyllida Lloyd.

Critics in Britain have praised Streep's acting, but have generally given the film a cooler reception, complaining that it skims over the tumultuous politics of the time and focuses too much on Thatcher's personality.

Others have said the film dilutes Thatcher's power as a politician by attempting to portray her as a feminine icon -- when in fact she rarely included any women in her cabinet, and preferred the company of men.

The Times' reviewer Kate Muir criticised the film's "emphasis on feminism over politics" which left the Thatcher years "almost unrecognisable."

Michael White, a journalist for the left-wing Guardian who covered Thatcher at the height of her power, suggested that the film should have been called "The Rusty Lady", given its unsparing portrayal of Thatcher in later life.

He, too, took issue with the attempts to portray Thatcher as something she was not, saying she was "not a satisfactory feminist icon. She could have promoted women... but didn't".

Excellent dining, charming ambiance and a breathtaking view found only at La Trattoria El Faro Blanco

Over twenty years ago, a very clever person had the idea of placing a cozy little restaurant on the top of the cliff adjacent to the California Lighthouse, offering the most stunning view of Aruba imaginable. La Trattoria el Faro Blanco took over the location some years ago, and the restaurant's quaint trappings, superb selection and amenable staff has made it a one of the island's most popular dining spots ever since.

Savoring the sight of a spectacular Aruban sunset and the tiered layout of the eatery also makes it the ideal spot for marking a special occasion, such as an anniversary or a marriage proposal, as well as a perfect venue for weddings or a celebratory party. An extensive and diverse menu and wine list allows those planning a special festivity will be able to devise a memorable event and management is ready and willing to help you stay within your budget.

Many have taken note of this singular location as the place to go for that memorable romantic meal, and their reservation staff reports a waiting list for the rail tables that offer the best unobstructed view, recommending reservations well in advance if this is important to you.

The restaurant is now open from early in the day for refreshments, and is the perfect lunch stop while touring, serving from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM, after which visitors can enjoy a light snack from their Pizza Mini Menu until 6:00 PM when they officially open for dinner, until 11:00 PM.

All these aspects of charming surroundings, dining al fresco with a breathtaking view (or in their enclosed air-conditioned dining room, if you prefer) and fine food makes La Trattoria El Faro the single dining experience that must not be missed before departing Aruba. Reser-



Stunning sunset



ervations can be made by calling 586- 0786 or 586-0787, or via e-mail link at their website, www.arubalatrattoria.com, where you can peruse their latest menu, as Chef Alberto is always devising some tasty new specialty to take advantage of what is fresh for the season.



Osso Buco with Risotto



Risotto Frutti de Mare



Parents Guide to Skin Protection



It's important to protect your children's skin from the damaging effects of the sun. No matter what they're doing or what time of year it is, if they are outdoors, they need to be protected.

Aruba is one of the places in the world where the sun is the strongest. Located only 12.5 degrees north of the equator, the sun shines with maximum strength and penetrates the atmosphere with a maximum amount of UV rays. What most people don't know on water and sand, which means that even in the shade you need protection.

Protecting the skin from the sun during childhood and adolescence is important in reducing cancer risks later in life. By building safe sun habits into your family's daily routine, you will make your children understand and get used to being protected against the sun and they will become more

can't see through when held up to light.

- Cover up with Hats. Choose hats that shade your child's face, neck and ears.

- Apply Sunscreen every day on skin that is not protected by clothing or a hat. Choose a sunscreen with a high Sun Protection Factor (SPF) such as Aruba Aloe's Waterproof SPF 30 sunscreen for maximum protection. For babies and children under 2 years old, make sure to use a special sunscreen that gives extra protection for the sensitive skin such as "Waterproof Babies SPF 30" from Aruba Aloe. Remember to reapply after swimming, sweating or toweling dry if you use a sunscreen that is not waterproof.

- Use sunscreen even on



hazy or overcast days.

- Keep an extra bottle of sunscreen in the car.

- Pack a bottle of sunscreen in your child's bag.

- Use Sunglasses that block UV rays and protect the eyes and the surrounding tender skin.

- Play in the Shade. The sun's rays are generally strongest from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. If your children are outdoors, make sure their skin is protected.

- Teach your children the shadow rule. When outside, if your shadow is shorter than you are, it means that the sun is high in the sky and the UV rays are most intense.

- Protect children younger than 6 months of age with clothing and keep them in the shade.

For more advice on how to best protect your and your children's skin against the sun, please call Aruba Aloe: 588-3222 or visit the website www.ArubaAloe.com

Aruba Aloe products are available at most hotels, supermarkets, pharmacies and the Aruba Aloe Stores.



aware of the harmful effects it can have to their skin. Parents should take the lead by giving the good example; children will respond better when they see their parents protecting their skin as well.

Important recommendations:

- Wear protective clothing when out in the sun. Choose shirts and slacks made of tightly woven fabrics that you

NBA: Heat edge Hawks in triple over-time



Ivan Johnson #44 of the Atlanta Hawks defends Chris Bosh #1 of the Miami Heat at Philips Arena on January 5, 2012 in Atlanta, Georgia.

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Chris Bosh scored 33 points and Mario Chalmers added 29 to lead Miami to a 116-109 win over Atlanta in triple over-time Thursday despite playing without two injured stars.

LeBron James was sidelined with an ankle injury while Dwyane Wade was out with a foot injury, leaving Bosh alone among Miami's "Big Three" to face a Hawks squad that inflicted the team's only prior defeat of the season.

But Chalmers answered the challenge, scoring 22 of his points in the fourth quarter and over-times to lift the Heat to an NBA-best 7-1 on the season.

The San Antonio Spurs, also missing a superstar with Argentine guard Manu Ginobili having had surgery on Thursday for a broken left hand, also triumphed, defeating the visiting Dallas Mavericks 93-71.

At Atlanta, Chalmers sank a 3-pointer with 3:45 to play in the third over-time, added two free throws and drove in for a layup with a minute remaining to finally provide Miami the deciding points.

The Hawks, who fell to 4-3, missed all seven of their shots in the third over-time and gave away two turnovers as well.

Udonis Haslem added 14 points for the Heat while Joe Johnson led Atlanta with 20 points and Josh Smith added 17 for the Hawks.

Bosh hit a tension-packed 3-pointer with 0.6 seconds remaining to pull the Heat level with the Hawks at 93-93, sending the game into over-time. Bosh had seven points in the fourth quarter to spark Miami.

Back-to-back layups by Chalmers put the Heat ahead 97-93 in the first over-time. Atlanta's Al Horford and Bosh traded layups before the Hawks

equalized on Ivan Johnson's rebound putback and Smith's outside jumper with 19 seconds remaining, sending the teams into the second over-time at 99-99.

Smith hit a layup to pull the Hawks within 103-101 in the second extra period but he committed a foul to set up two free throws for Miami.

Joe Johnson followed with a basket for Atlanta but Bosh answered for the Heat midway into the over-time only for Johnson to respond with another hoop and Horford tip-in an equalizer to make it 107-107 with 55 seconds to play.

Marvin Williams tipped in an Ivan Johnson shot to give the Hawks a lead but Chalmers answered with two free throws to send the game to a third over-time.

At San Antonio, Matt Bonner led the Spurs with 17 points while Richard Jefferson added 16 for San Antonio, which also had 11 points and eight assists from French guard Tony Parker.

The Spurs led 31-17 after the first quarter and 55-29 at half-time on the way to victory.

Reserve Jason Terry led the reigning NBA champions with 12 points while Delonte West with 10 points was the only Dallas starter in double figures.

German star Dirk Nowitzki shot 3-of-11 from the field and managed only six points for the Mavericks, who as a team shot only 35 percent.

Tennis: Injured Federer, beaten Nadal

continued from page 16

Nadal did dominate more of the rallies in the first set, only to be bamboozled by sudden injections of counter-hitting pace by Monfils.

It then seemed that Nadal was turning the match around when he went 4-1 up, mixing in slower, loopier drives with his attacks.

He might even have made it 5-0 had Monfils not saved a break point with a fine first serve down the middle.

Three games later Monfils played three brilliant ambush-

ing attacks to break back for 3-4, and after saving a break point against him in the next game, made the killer thrust to reach 5-4.

He broke Nadal's service game to love, stayed calm as the French Open champion tenaciously saved two match points, and closed out the match at the third attempt with a good first serve and a driving follow-up.

Having played two matches in pain, Grand Slam record-holder Federer preferred to

give himself the best chance of appearing in decent shape for the first Grand Slam tournament of the year, the Australian Open, starting at Melbourne in 10 days' time.

"Although it's not very good it's not crazy bad," Federer said.

"I have had bad backs on the past, but this is not very good, otherwise I would definitely be playing."

"It's only the second time I have pulled out from a tournament, and I have never pulled out during a match. It's a sad moment for me, the tournament, and the fans, but health comes first."

Federer was "optimistic" he would be fit for the Australian Open, where he will be trying to win the title back from Novak Djokovic.

"I feel that without play and with the right treatment, I will get through it in the next few days," he said.

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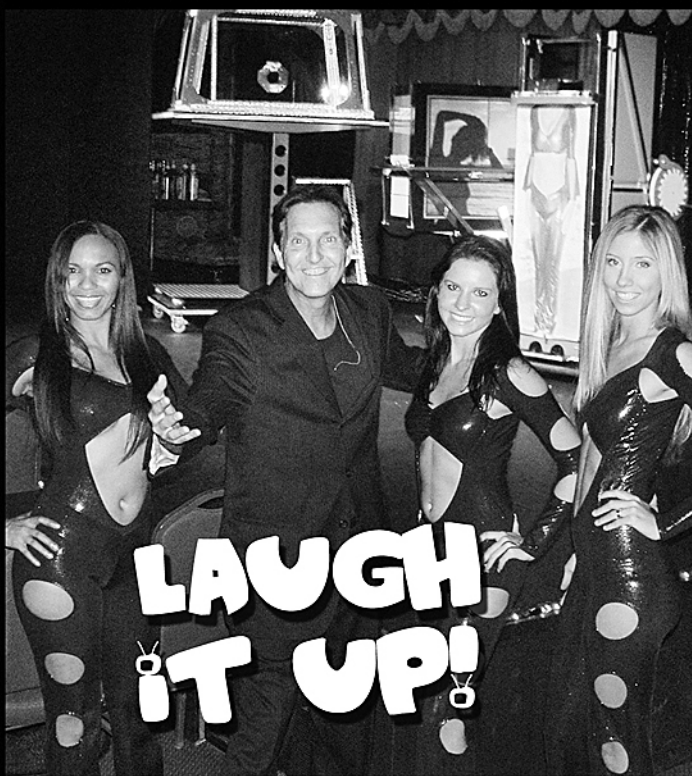
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TUESDAY AND FRIDAY: LIVE MUSIC

NFL: Long-suffering teams make playoff returns

NEW YORK (AFP) - American football teams in Detroit, Houston, and Denver end long playoff droughts this weekend, but whether any of them can make the achievement last more than one game is a major question.

The National Football League playoffs kick off Saturday with the Cincinnati Bengals visiting the Houston Texans and the Detroit Lions at the New Orleans Saints in opening-round matchups.

Sunday's playoff games find the Atlanta Falcons at the New York Giants and the Pittsburgh Steelers at Denver

in the first playoff game for the Broncos after a six-season hiatus.

The weekend's four winners advance to second-round games January 14-15 that will be hosted by San Francisco, New England, Baltimore and the defending Super Bowl champion Green Bay Packers, who led the NFL with a 15-1 season mark.

The Lions, who had not reached the playoffs in 12 seasons, are coming off the worst campaign in NFL history, going 0-16 three seasons ago. Detroit has won only one playoff game, in 1991, since taking the 1957 NFL title.

"It has been a long time coming," said Lions coach Jim Schwartz. "This is the chance to win the championship and that's the only thing that's important. I think that it's what you do with it and that's the way we'll look at it."

Detroit offers a passing attack powered by quarterback Matthew Stafford, who completed 63.5 percent of his passes for 5,038 yards and 41 touchdowns, and Calvin Jackson, who had an NFL-best 1,681 receiving yards and 16 touchdown catches.

The Lions won four times this season after trailing by 13 or more points in the second half.

But they are matched against the Saints, who won the 2010 Super Bowl behind Drew Brees, the quarterback who set NFL single season



Champ Bailey #24 of the Denver Broncos breaks up the catch by Jonathan Baldwin #89 of the Kansas City Chiefs at Sports Authority Field at Mile High on January 1, 2012 in Denver, Colorado.

passing records with 5,476 yards, 468 completions and a 71.2 percent completion rate in 2011.

The Saints enter the playoffs on an eight-game win streak, matching New England for the hottest run to close the season, and joined Baltimore and Green Bay as the only clubs to win every home game this season.

At Houston, the injury-hit Texans have reached the playoffs for the first time in the franchise's 10-year history despite dropping their final three games of the season.

Injuries ended the season for quarterback Matt Schaub and defensive end Mario Williams and sidelined 2010 NFL rushing leader Arian Foster and star receiver Andre Johnson.

The Bengals went 9-0 against teams that missed the playoffs but winless in seven games against playoff clubs. With rookie quarterback Andy Dalton shining and rusher Cedric Benson grounding out yards, Cincinnati looks to avenge a 20-19 loss to Houston last month, the last time the Texans won a game.

Denver struggled to an 8-8 season and the Broncos are nine-point underdogs at home to six-time Super Bowl champion Pittsburgh, but Denver southpaw quarterback Tim Tebow has defied the odds all season to get his team this far.

The Broncos started 1-4 with Kyle Orton at quarterback, but Tebow took over

midway into an October loss at San Diego and the team went 7-1, winning six games in a row at one stage.

Defenses began pressuring Tebow late in the season and Denver staggered to the finish to reach the playoffs on tie-breakers. With Pittsburgh known for tenacious defense, led by Troy Polamalu, Tebow could face another rough day.

The Falcons were top seeds in last season's playoffs but lost their playoff opener for the second year in a row.

Atlanta is led by Matt Ryan, who threw for 4,177 yards and 29 touchdowns, receiver Roddy White, who caught 100 passes for 1,296 yards, and star tight end Tony Gonzalez, who grabbed 80 passes for 875 yards and seven touchdowns.

The Giants come off a tense victory over Dallas just to reach the playoffs that has left them prepared, New York coach Tom Coughlin said.

The Giants have lost their past two home playoff games, last winning on home turf in the playoffs in 2001.

While New York's defense struggled much of the season, the Giants finished with 48 sacks, third-best in the NFL, and improved late in the season when top talent returned from injuries.

"We can be the best defense in the playoffs," Giants safety Deon Grant said. "It's just us coming together and being on the same page."

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Printed by
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AVB presents the Copa Betico Aruba Schedule

Aruba...come, supports your favorite team

'Arubaanse Voetbalbond' – the Aruba Football Federation once more is organizing a tremendous 'Copa Betico Croes' tournament. The first round starts Monday, January 9, when the competing teams demonstrate their sports skills to advance to the second round. Who will be the champion of the 'Copa Betico Croes 2012?'

Schedule for the first round:

DAY	DATE	HOUR	GAME	FIELD
Monday	9/1/2012	8:00 PM	LA FAMA vs BUBALI	CDFF
Tuesday	10/1/2012	8:00 PM	CAIQUETIO vs JuventudTL	CDFF
Wednesday	11/1/2012	8:00 PM	RCA vs BRAZIL JRS	CDFF
Thursday	12/1/2012	8:00 PM	NACIONAL vs UNISTARS	CDFF
Friday	13/1/2012	8:00 PM	BRITANIA vs CARAVEL	CDFF
Saturday	14/1/2012	8:00 PM	SPORTING vs ESTRELLA	CDFF
Sunday	15/1/2012	5:00 PM	DAKOTA vs TRUPIAL	CDFF
Sunday	15/1/2012	7:00 PM	RIVERPLATE vs ARSENAL	CDFF

* CDFF = Compleho Deportivo Frans Figaroa

AVB invites everyone to come and enjoy a good soccer game, support their favorite team and at the same time contribute to the development and motivation of athletics among island youth. This tournament promises to be very interesting, considering that Aruba's teams have been training hard and level of play has shown considerable advancement.



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Injured Federer, beaten Nadal out of Qatar Open



Rafael Nadal of Spain serves to Gael Monfils of France during their Qatar ATP Open Tennis tournament semifinal match at the Khalifa Tennis and Squash Complex in Doha on January 6, 2012. Monfils won 6-3, 6-4. O

DOHA (AFP) - Top-seeded Rafael Nadal was hustled out of the Qatar Open in the semi-finals on Friday, joining second-seeded Roger Federer at the Doha exit door after the Swiss star pulled out with a back injury.

French Open champion Nadal lost 6-3, 6-4 to Gael Monfils, the world number 16 from France.

The result guaranteed a French winner of the Qatar Open for the first time since Nicolas Escude eight years ago, for Jo-Wilfried Tsonga also reached the final when Federer's hopes were scuppered by a bad back.

Federer's decision to pull out before a ball was hit was only the second time in his career that he had been forced into such a decision.

For Monfils, it was only the second time in 10 attempts that he had got the better of Nadal.

Curiously the other occasion was on this same court three years ago before Nadal went on to win the Australian Open.

This time the quality of Monfils' play was even higher and he suggested that, at the age of 25, he may still

have the time and the mentality to make a challenge to the leaders.

"I like this stadium and atmosphere -- I play great tennis here," he said of an arena with an intimate, highly charged ambience at night.

"I think I served well and I was very fast around the court," added Monfils, who had served 19 first serves into court in a row at one stage in the second set.

His second comment was an understatement, for his withering speed may well have raised doubts in Nadal's mind about the best shot selection.

Nadal followed quite well his new emphasis of heavier attacks from nearer to or inside the baseline, but was frequently prevented from getting full value from them.

Inevitably the loss will continue the questions about the efficacy of the world number two's preparation for the 2012 season.

Problems with his shoulder, a new and heavier racket, and only five days off-season training have not created maximum confidence.

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